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The Grizzly, March 22, 2007

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The Grizzly

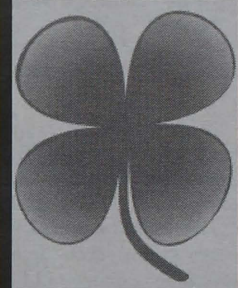
Thursday, March 22, 2007

The student newspaper of Ursinus College

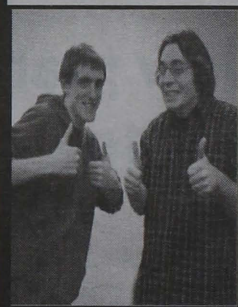
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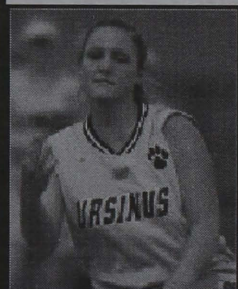
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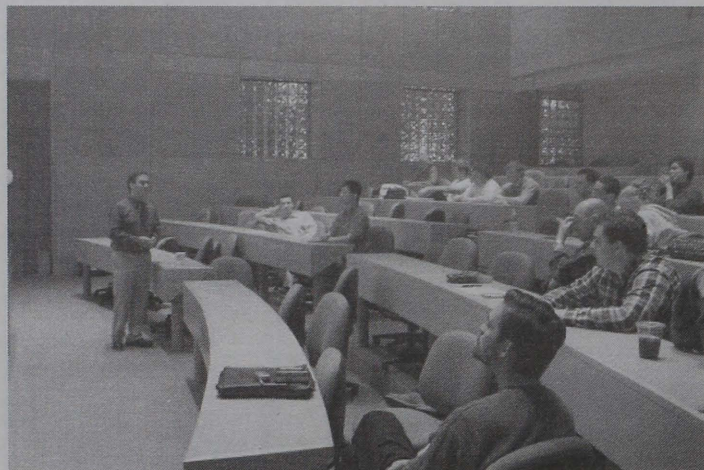
Collegeville, Pa.

Volume 31, Issue 20

Speaker on ethics in the pharmaceutical industry

ASHLEY HIGGINS

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David Perlman, Ph.D., gave a lecture on March 14 at 7 p.m. in the Pfahler Auditorium to the mix of nearly 30 students and professors. His presentation was entitled "Danger and Opportunity: Bioethic(ist)s and the Pharmaceutical Industry." Perlman is currently an instructor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, in addition to his involvement with the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services. He is a former senior education advisor to GlaxoSmithKline. While an employee at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP several years ago, he also consulted many pharmaceutical companies.

Perlman obtained a Ph.D. in Philosophy and specializes in bioethics. He calls himself a bioethics triple threat because he has worked in academia, industry, and government. These three areas, particularly academia and industry, are very mistrustful of

one another and constantly at odds, according to Perlman. Because of his unique experience in all three work arenas, Perlman offers a self-proclaimed "balanced" stance on the pharmaceutical industry. The popular and cynical view is that the pharmaceutical industry has no ethical standards or measures, which he says is untrue after working in all three arenas. Perlman showed a Time Magazine cover from April 22, 2002, which shows a woman in a guinea pig cage, and asserted that this view of the pharmaceutical industry is simply untrue.

Perlman framed his talk with the metaphor of crisis, which he showed in the Chinese character "Wei-Ji." Though Wei-Ji is the Chinese symbol for crisis, it is actually a dual character, having the character for danger as its upper half and the character for opportunity as its lower half. The Wei-Ji character appeals to Perlman because he views it as a symbol that keenly describes the pharmaceutical industry. Some of the dangers of the pharmaceutical industry are fairly obvious, such as the obvious conflict of interest in mixing scientific enterprise with the motive of profit-making. However, the field of bioethics also has many extremely lucrative career opportunities for philosophy majors, as well as for science majors.

The opportunity half of the Wei-Ji character is also represented in the multitude of ethical issues that are applicable to the pharmaceutical industry. To name a few research ethics issues specifically, Perlman cited research on animals, disclosure of the results of clinical trials, conflicts of interest among investigators, and protection of research subjects. Disclosure of clinical trial results has gotten much recent press and Perlman said that this issue alone has "shaken the integrity of science in our country." He mentioned the recalled Merck drug Vioxx. Approved by the FDA in 1999, Vioxx was a new drug for arthritis. It was later recalled after several people in the United States died of cardiac complications caused by the drug. Merck was accused of hiding those cardiac side effects from the public.

Similarly, Perlman's former employer, GlaxoSmithKline, was also accused of hiding information about an antidepressant's possible side effect of increasing suicidal thoughts or behaviors. As a result, GlaxoSmithKline has now started disclosing all the information on clinical trials on a public Web site. Perlman, however, is quick to note that the scientific jargon and graphs used on this page are extremely difficult for a layperson to understand. Also, it is now a requirement for all pharmaceutical companies to register their trials with the government before conducting them, making it impossible to hide results.

Perhaps even more problematic is a current crisis among bioethicists themselves. Since the field is so new, there are no educational or professional standards for someone entering the field. Ironically, there is also no code of ethics for these professionals. Perlman views the bioethicist as having a very unique role in the pharmaceutical industry. Though, as previously mentioned, academia and industry share a mutual mistrust, they do follow the same ethical guidelines. Perlman concludes by encouraging students to enter the bioethics field because the bioethicists themselves would be the ideal people to bridge this gap, given proper training.

New plans for the field house

On Friday, March 16, an e-mail was sent out to all Ursinus students from Kimberly Taylor, Director of Campus Safety, regarding the new plan for the field house. Students are now being encouraged to use the field house for open recreation time.

The field house will now remain open until 2 a.m. on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights. While students are allowed to use this space, college athletic events take precedence over recreational usage. If a college official asks a student to leave the space due to a scheduled activity, students must immediately comply.

The field house is open for informal recreational activity, but no equipment will be made available. It will be accessible via card swipe from the door off the West parking lot. This is the door that leads directly into the field house. Card access will be granted until closing for this door, but no other doors will grant access to the building.

Card access should make the process of admittance run smoothly. However, students are asked to note that any ID card used for access will be recorded in the Ursinus computer system. Therefore, students should not allow access to anyone they do not know, since the ID card on record will show the responsible party. For these same reasons, students are asked not to prop the doors for any reason, and to use only the field house and the restrooms. All other parts of the building are off limits. To make sure these rules are enforced, Campus Safety Officers will make routine patrols of the area and building, including a final patrol at 2 a.m. to be sure all students are out of the building and all lights are shut down.

The program coordinators are hopeful that this new plan for the field house will be successful, allowing students to enjoy recreational activities in the athletic facilities.

The Grizzly

The student newspaper of Ursinus College

Volume 31, Issue 20

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Potential carcinogen found abundant in Collegeville

SARAH KECK

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Grave concerns have been raised among Collegeville residents about the recent discovery of high levels of the suspected carcinogen trichloroethylene (TCE) in the area.

TCE came to the United States in the late 1920s from Europe and sustained multiple uses for nearly half a century, found in boot polishes, printing ink dryers, metal de-greasers, dry cleaning products, adhesives, typewriter correction fluid, and spot removers.

In the 1970s, the use of TCE peaked and then quickly declined after a study conducted in convergence with the Clean Air Act identified it as a pollutant. Shortly after this announcement, the National Cancer Institute found that exposure to TCE was causing cancerous growths in the livers of tested mice.

Back in 2002, there were complaints about the air quality in the Pottstown area which the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) followed up on by setting up an air sampling station at Pottstown High School. The results of this investigation led to an unexpected and unsettling discovery in the Collegeville area.

When samples were taken from sampling station, the DEP tested for 55 volatile organic compounds, of which they found traces of 37 of them. What most disturbed state officials, however, were the unusually and notably dangerous levels of TCE.

Around the same time the DEP was making TCE discoveries in the air in Pottstown, an investigation, independent of this one, uncovered traces of TCE contaminated groundwater along Farmington Avenue in Upper Pottsgrove. Curious about the reoccurring appearance of TCE, DEP officials decided to test for TCE contamination in Collegeville and Trappe, where there have been previous reports of TCE contamination.

Residents were disturbed when the results were released.

The levels of TCE found in Trappe and Collegeville were not only high, but skyrock-

eted in comparison to levels in other areas in closer proximity. Noticeable levels of TCE were found in 76 percent of the samples in Collegeville, and in 82 percent in Trappe. In nearby Pottsgrove, levels were only detected in 32 percent of the samples.

These results caused residents to cry out.

A meeting, hosted by the Pennsylvania DEP, was held on Feb 20 in the auditorium at Perkiomen Valley Middle School East to discuss the results and their implications. To make results more understandable for everyone, the DEP translated the results into risk factors.

The results indicate that, when the TCE levels, combined with the other volatile organic compounds found, are factored in to risk levels, 2.4 more people in 10,000 are likely to develop cancer in Collegeville and 3.1 more people in 10,000 are likely to develop cancer in Trappe. These results are dictated under the statistics released from the American Cancer Society.

The DEP is already taking steps toward reducing the levels of TCE in Collegeville and Trappe, first by ensuring that the companies emitting the alleged carcinogen find ways of lowering their limits, and also by installing carbon absorbers to contain some of the TCE that has already been emitted. Residents at the meeting demanded that these steps be taken more quickly than initially suggested.

To view the report that was presented by the DEP at the meeting on Feb 20, visit www.dep.state.pa.us. To see the plans and actions of reduction of TCE emissions, visit www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-AIR/2006/August/Day-17/a6927.pdf.

Back to the Bellevue

The Student Activities Office would like to cordially invite you to...



Ball at the Bellevue

At the Park Hyatt in Philadelphia

Friday March 30, 2007 from 8 p.m.-12 a.m.

Begin boarding buses at 6:45 p.m., departure at 7:00 p.m.

Return time 1:00 a.m.

Hors d'oeuvre will be served and fabulous prizes will be raffled off

Tickets are \$5 for UC students, faculty, and staff

\$7 for outside guests (Limit 2 outside tickets per UC member)

Formal attire - black tie optional

WeCAN button and t-shirt campaign successful

SALIA ZOUANDE

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Students and faculty members of WeCAN, Ursinus College's social justice organization, have been fervently running a campaign to make our college apparel sweatshop-free for the past few weeks. A student crowd came out to the WeCAN call at the Valentine's Rally that took place just a couple of weeks ago, and it was a huge success, despite the frigid weather.

Students presented the administration with a letter signed by representatives of the student government and on-campus social justice organizations requesting affiliation to the Worker's Rights Consortium (WRC), which imposed some regulations on the college apparel in November. The administration did agree to affiliate the college with WRC, but for just a short period, until the college administration withdrew that offer for legal reasons.

Since the last refusal of the administration to affiliate itself with WRC, WeCAN has been negotiating with the administration to review connections to the WRC. WeCAN members are reworking a draft of a letter to the administration, requesting connection to the WRC. Meanwhile, an active two-day button and t-shirt campaign occurred in front of Wisner to get students to sign a petition for workers' rights. Many faculty members and students took part in the campaign to show their support to ban sweatshop apparel on campus; over 200 signed the petition.

WeCAN will be having a "Why Haven't We signed On Yet?" or "Yay For The DSP" Rally on Friday, March 23, with more details to follow. WeCAN members are meeting with the administration sometime next week to address the present concerns.

WeCAN meetings are held every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in the Unity House. Please come to find out about ways that you can get involved in a good cause. Show your support for workers' rights!

For any additional information about WeCAN upcoming projects, please e-mail Dina Yarmus at diyarmus@ursinus.edu. For more information, you can also visit www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org and www.workerrights.org. If you have any useful ideas or want to assist with the different events, please contact Jessica Devaul, at jedevaul@ursinus.edu.

COMMENTS SOUGHT FOR TENURE REVIEW

In accordance with the Ursinus College Faculty Handbook, student comments on teaching effectiveness and student-faculty interaction are invited at the time of a faculty member's review for tenure. Although student letters must be signed to be considered, student names may be withheld, upon request, when their comments are shared with the Promotion and Tenure Committee and the faculty member.

This spring, the following member of the faculty is being reviewed for tenure: Dr. Jonathan Marks, Politics

Your feedback is strongly encouraged and will assist the Committee in its review process. Letters should be sent to Dean Judith T. Levy, Office of the Dean, by April 27, 2007.

Scientific sexual healing



LANE TAYLOR

Everything You Never Knew You Wanted to Know About Sex

What does the average person get out of sex? Most would probably respond, "Closeness with his or her partner, and the evolutionary aspect that drives us mammals to mate: pleasure." However, in reality, people engaging in safe, consensual sex are taking much more from the experience than simply the experience itself. Recent studies have shown that the benefits one can experience from sex go

beyond orgasmic satisfaction and can actually improve one's health and daily life. And, as I am constantly ready to defy those who have negative opinions and judgments over the sexual lives and choices of others, I write again to destroy the senseless stigma placed against sex with solid and scientific reasoning as to why there is absolutely nothing wrong with having sex.

According to Momscape.com, having an active sex life in a committed relationship can have a significant impact on your health. Endorphins, which are chemicals in our body that have a "feel-good" effect when released, are released during sex, and can aid in alleviating pain. Sex can also benefit and strengthen the immune system, due to chemicals that are released during intercourse, according to Paul Pearsall, Ph.D. A study was conducted by Dr. David Weeks of The Royal Edinburgh Hospital that even asserts that sex causes the aging process to slow. (Momscape.com)

One of the most thrilling aspects of "sexual healing" is that it impacts both men and women substantially. According to Men's Health magazine editor, Hugh O'Neill, men who engage in intercourse at least three times a week lower their chances of suffering from prostate difficulties. Testosterone flow is also encouraged during sex, which impacts bone and muscle strength. Regarding women's health, the chemical oxytocin is released during sex, which causes feelings of affection and nurturing. (Momscape.com) WorldHealth.net associates oxytocin with both men and women, and notes the cause of its release to be feelings of affection and love. Because this hormone causes an increase in sexual longing, it can lead to the amount of sex a couple engages in to amplify. (WorldHealth.net) Also, the female hormones secreted during sex are extremely beneficial in preventing heart disease and softening the tract of the vagina. (WorldHealth.net) And according to

WorldHealth.net, the steroid DHEA is released during intercourse in both men and women, and has been linked to the growth of muscle mass, depression prevention, enhanced sex drive, and longevity.

Both Web sites also discuss sex as a form of exercise, and state that having sex three times a week, every week, for one year, burns as many calories as running (Momscape.com) or jogging (WorldHealth.net) 75 miles. And because it's a form of exercise, it decreases the level of cholesterol in the body and causes an increase in energy. It also causes the amount of oxygen in the body to increase, which causes stimulation throughout the assorted systems of the body. (WorldHealth.net)

Sex has also been linked to stress reduction and relaxation, which is extremely advantageous for both the body and mind. (The circulatory system in particular benefits from the stress reduction and relaxation associated with sex.) Sex is also believed to have the ability to alleviate pain in some instances, specifically when regarding joint pain and headaches. (WorldHealth.net)

Momscape.com stresses the importance of being in a trusting sexual relationship, because uncomfortable and untrusting relationships can often cause anxiety which would counteract and inhibit many of the possible health benefits.

The scientific and public health communities are now accepting sex as a beneficial and healthy aspect of life, so perhaps with a little help from both you and them, those still trapped in archaic convictions circa 1950 can modernize, and then begin to exercise. But if they can't or won't be won over, that certainly shouldn't stop those of us less concerned with stigma and more concerned with physical health to start, or continue, working out.

clinically obese women (yet another limiting factor), that seems fairly insignificant for an extended period of time. But once again, these are the things that those human-interest headlines leave out. Ultimately, it comes down to the fact that different methods work for different people. "Studies," even in their most extensive form, can sometimes only suggest certain methods. The key is in individual levels of commitment to improved health.

Nutrition tips for the UC student: 'Atkins' in the news

AMANDA BRYMAN

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Due to circumstances beyond this columnist's control, she found herself watching a daytime entertainment news program for several hours during spring break. Ultimately, it turned out to be a boon, as it alerted her to the "breaking news" regarding a recent comparative study of the success rates of several diets, in terms of weight loss. The results? Researchers found that the Atkins low-carbohydrate, high-protein diet bested the other programs tested.

That sentence alone would suggest that the (long and steadily fading) low-carb mania was justified after all. It did show results. The problem, unfortunately, is that relying on news bytes and condensed results for nutrition tips is about as fool-proof as trusting a used-car salesman: when people try to sell something, they cater to the desires of their target demographic. And when diets are concerned, those desires do not always line up with the healthiest choices.

The abstract for the study is available online, at <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/abstract/297/9/969>, and as should be expected, it gives a far better account than a news blurb ever could. In addition to Atkins, the study included the Ornish, LEARN, and Zone diets, which range

from recommending high-carbohydrate and low-fat intakes to low-carbohydrate and high-protein intakes. Right away, this excludes any diets that promote portion control or calorie counting as their primary methods, preferring four plans that are based on depriving the body of certain nutrients. The study's primary objective was to track weight loss (any other health benefits were only secondary), and only over the course of a year, with little mention of sustainability or long-term side effects.

All in all, the study simply set out to prove that carbohydrates should not form the bulk of our diets, and that simply omitting fat does not guarantee improved health. All of this is true, albeit that it seems like old news at this point. The concern is in the way that the media jump on newly released information, and unblinkingly skews a limited comparison of only four very specific eating regimens into, "Atkins is the best way to lose weight." The USDA's pyramid (<http://www.mypyramid.gov>) might not be perfect, as evidenced by its recent makeover, but it encourages a balance of food groups for a reason: the body absorbs things from food that it just cannot process as efficiently from a supplementary pill. Omitting anything entirely, whether carbohydrates or fat, is just too extreme; naturally, it leaves the pyramid to crumble. (Yes, it's a cheesy metaphor, but that's the point.)

In this study, even the triumphant Atkins diet only averaged about 10 pounds of weight loss over a period of 12 months. Given that the study focused exclusively on

Do you have any questions regarding sexual or general health? Ask them!!
Email Features editor Lane Taylor, at lataylor@ursinus.edu, to see an article based on your question in an upcoming issue. (As always, confidentiality is a guarantee.)

A brief history of St. Patrick's Day

ASHLEY HIGGINS

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St. Patrick's Day is celebrated worldwide as the feast of St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, and as a national and public holiday in Ireland. St. Patrick's Day brings together those of Irish and non-Irish descent in festivities including all things green: Irish food and drink, and parades. St. Patrick's Day parades occur in thousands of cities worldwide, with the largest taking place in New York City to an audience of 2 million spectators. Though the New York City parade is the largest parade, St. Patrick's Day parades did not start in New York City until 1766, when Irish soldiers marched through the streets. The New York City parade has also been dogged by controversy in recent years, specifically when gays and lesbians were banned from participating. In towns in Ireland, St. Patrick's Day parades are part of multi-day festivals. For example, in Dublin, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated for five days.

Though St. Patrick's Day is widely regarded as a secular holiday today, until recently, St. Patrick's Day was exclusively for the religious. James O'Mara, the Irish MP who introduced the Bank Holiday Act of 1903 to the United Kingdom Parliament, made St. Patrick's Day a public holiday for the first time. O'Mara then unwisely declared that all pubs be closed on March 17, a law that was not repealed until the 1970s. The first St. Patrick's Day parade in the Irish Free State (the former term for the Republic of Ireland) occurred in Dublin in 1931, and it was not until the mid-1990s that the Irish government began using St. Patrick's Day as a holiday to showcase Irish culture rather than just the religious figure of St. Patrick himself. This new governmental aim was apparent in the first St. Patrick's day festival in 1996, which, by the next year became a 3-day festival, and by 2006, a 5-day festival. Common sights in these festivals include shamrocks and the colors of the Irish flag, particularly green. However, many do not know that the official color of St. Patrick's Day was at one point blue.

Though St. Patrick himself is the integral figure in this international celebration, very little is known about his life. Though March 17 is believed to be the day he died sometime in the 5th century, his birthdate and missionary years in Ireland are still widely debated, though most scholars agree that he was actively preaching sometime in the late 5th century. Most scholars now also subscribe to T.F. O'Rahilly's once-controversial "Two-Patricks" theory, which claims that the figure now revered as St. Patrick is actually an amalgamation of the work of two men, Palladius and Patrick.

Spotlight on Professor Laurian Bowles

CORINNE LICCKETTO

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Laurian Bowles is a Professor in the Anthropology and Sociology Department at Ursinus College. Surprisingly, Bowles was unsure of the concept of anthropology until she entered college. She initially majored in Journalism at Penn State, and was set on finding a job working at a newspaper. When she graduated, she began writing for the lifestyle section of a local paper. Her interest in culture pushed her focus toward people, which gave her the drive to write articles concerning the community members. However, her passion for studying people extended past the weekly articles; she decided to pursue her true interests: culture and travel.

Professor Bowles attended the University of London for her Masters in Anthropology. She lived in the city for a year and a half, but when the expenses took their toll on her wallet, she moved back to the United States. She is currently working toward her doctorate.

At Ursinus, Professor Bowles teaches Anthropology 100, Cultural Aspects of Globalization 251, Visual Anthropology 251, and Peoples of Africa 252, which happens to be her favorite course. She enjoys teaching her students about the diversity of cultures across the continent. Bowles also teaches the contemporary ideals that exist within certain countries due to the globalization of western practices. The course is interesting and educational, and will be available next semester.

When she teaches a class, she expects her students to express themselves honestly. Studying culture can sometimes lead to controversial arguments, and she hopes that students will not hold back their honest opinions. "We're socialized not to offend anyone," she said, "but it's important for people to express themselves completely." When her classroom setting yields complete expression from her students, she takes it as a compliment. She has no stringent expectation of what constitutes a "good student," she only expects that everyone strives to be a critical thinker.

Before Professor Bowles began teaching at Ursinus, she taught English in Ghana at a Liberian refugee camp. Ghana is where she conducts most of her field work, mainly dealing with

Though St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, he was not born in Ireland. He was a British citizen who was kidnapped and sold into slavery in Ireland when he was 16. Years later, he escaped and returned to his family, but went back to Ireland after his ordination as a missionary. Much of the religious imagery associated with St. Patrick is also highly contested by scholars. The legend of St. Patrick claims that he banished snakes from Ireland, though scientists insist there were no snakes in post-glacial Ireland. This snake imagery is perhaps representative of the Druids or beliefs such as Pelagianism. St. Patrick's use of the shamrock to explain the complicated Christian concept of the Trinity is also contested.

Though details of St. Patrick's life and ministry may be inaccurate, the sheer number and cohesiveness of these legends reflects the importance of St. Patrick in Irish religious folklore and culture. St. Patrick's Day is, beyond a doubt, the most important and most widely celebrated holiday in Irish culture.

Career Corner: Junior-year jumpstart

CAREER SERVICES

www.ursinus.edu/career

Many new graduates are not aware of all the possibilities that exist for someone with their particular background, skills, and interests. Summer is a great time for juniors to research the possibilities through online resources and information interviews with friends, family and UC alumni.

After developing a clear sense of the types of jobs you would like to pursue, research industries and identify companies of interest to you. Learn about hiring trends/cycles for those industries. For example, large organizations in some industries (e.g., public accounting, information technology, consulting, and pharmaceuticals) are able to predict their annual hiring needs and begin recruiting as early as September! Timing can be a critical factor; make sure that you are prepared when you return to school in the fall. Write a rough draft of your resume and have it critiqued by the Career Services office. Become familiar with all the Web-based tools on our Web page, all accessible during the summer. Get comfortable with UC CareerNet.

Although graduate school applications are due typically during the fall or spring semester of your senior year, you can work with advisors and obtain application information during the summer. Determine the degree (e.g., M.S. versus Ph.D.) that will enable you to reach your career goals.

Begin to research programs. Use the Peterson's Graduate School Guides, www.Gradschool.com, and other related resources to help you locate schools that offer the program(s) you are interested in. If you plan on taking the GRE, consider using the summer to study and taking the exam before you return in the fall.

If you are a junior, it's not too early to start your preparation for next year's career activities! Those who are bound for graduate school cannot afford to miss the program "Orientation to Graduate School Applications" on Thursday, March 29, at 4:00 p.m. in Bomberger Hall, room 129.

young, female migrants. She teaches them how to use photography as a tool of empowerment, instructing them how to use a camera and forcing them to question how it can empower their lives. She also studies global hip-hop, embracing music from Cuba, Africa, and many other places.

Outside of teaching, Bowles enjoys traveling. Her favorite place is Berlin, Germany. "I think...Berlin is one of the most vibrant and exciting places," she stated. She believes the place is affirming of the new generation of young people. There, individuality is stressed, and that mentality made it special to her. "I love my truly international life," Bowles stated. She is literally always on the go!

She also has a passion for music. She enjoys soul, reggae, and hip-hop, and At Ursinus, she shows interest in We CAN and the Ursinus Democrats. Although she is not an advisor, she provides support to the organizations.

Whether you've had her for a class or not, take time to say hello to her on campus!

Obamamania!

JON GAGAS

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Barack Obama has been the darling of the Democratic Party since 2004, when his speech at the Democratic National Convention earned him comparisons to Bobby Kennedy. His latest book, *The Audacity of Hope*, dropped to the number two spot on the *New York Times* Best Seller List of Hardcover Nonfiction only last week; it's been on the list for twenty. His first book, *Dreams From My Father*, is number five on the Paperback Nonfiction List. No other presidential hopeful's book – Democrat or Republican – has claimed one of the top thirty-five spots on either list, unless you count *An Inconvenient Truth* by Al Gore, who has claimed again and again that he isn't going to run in '08. Unlike some other notable Democratic presidential contenders, both past (John Kerry) and present (Hillary Clinton), Senator Obama is free of the baggage of voting to authorize an increasingly unpopular war.

Unlike the war in Iraq, however, Obama is shooting up in the polls. According to the latest Zogby telephone survey (conducted February 22-24), which asked Republicans, Democrats, and Independents to choose which candidate they would support in the next primary or caucus, Obama has jumped up nine points among people who say they would vote in a Democratic primary, narrowing Hillary Clinton's lead to just eight points. And when pitted against the top three Republican contenders in a general election – Rudy Giuliani, John McCain, and Mitt Romney – the poll has Obama beating each one, while Hillary Clinton and John Edwards lose to everyone except Romney.

So it's clear that Obama is riding a wave of popularity. But the question remains, can he win? Maybe. Opinion polls change; both the primaries and the general election are still a year and a half away, and presidential hopefuls become presidents by winning states, not the popular vote. Even if the election were held this Tuesday, the outcome could easily be different than what the polls indicate, as demonstrated by the 1980 presidential election, when Carter won 41 percent of the popular vote but only a paltry 49 electoral college votes compared to Reagan's 489, or more dramatically, by the heavily contested 2000 election, when Al Gore won the popular vote but lost the electoral college and thus the election. Also, who's reading Obama's books? If many of the 20 percent of undecided voters – which includes Democrats but also independents and moderate Republicans – are reading him, that bodes well for his success in the general election. Whatever your political leanings, it's hard to deny that he's an engaging writer. If it's solely Democrats that have propelled *The Audacity of Hope* to the top of bestseller lists, however, Obama might have a better chance of beating Clinton in the primaries, not an easy thing to do – Clinton has one of the best political machines in the country behind her, her husband's political savvy, and a shrewd political mind which has proven itself adept at building consensus across party lines in the senate.

Obama's cult of personality – the word "Obamamania" has been in the popular parlance for at least several months now – simply won't last long enough to propel him to victory in 2008. He's done a good job so far of defining himself as an optimistic figure somehow above the polarized partisan bickering that has characterized our national dialogue for the past several years, but he's going to have to jump into the fracas of debates on hard issues,

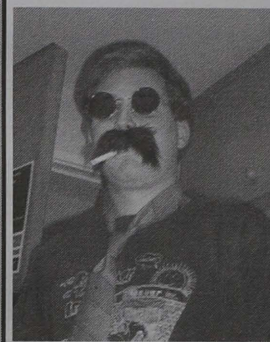
and he's going to have to do it soon. He's got a good shot at not being dragged into the mud if he can keep a clear head and navigate between Howard Dean-style outbursts and John Kerry-esque banality while explaining his fairly moderate positions on most issues in a way that resonates with Americans, a task which he's likely up to – he was, after all, president of the *Harvard Law Review* and a *magna cum laude* graduate of Harvard Law, not a C student at Yale like both major 2004 presidential candidates. However, after recent unveilings of past stock purchases of what appeared to be a dubious ethical nature, purchases which he has apparently accounted for successfully to the American people, Obama sounded more like John Kerry than Robert Kennedy when he explained the nature of the purchases. His opponents have a year and a half to bring similar scandals to light; who knows if any of them, true or not, will stick in the minds of American voters enough to bring him down politically, and whether Obama will be able to defend himself without falling into a trap of the magnitude of Kerry's infamous "I actually voted for the \$87 billion [to fund the Iraq war] before I voted against it" gaffe?

In the end, American politics are all about image, as they have been ever since the first televised presidential debate in 1960 between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. In an era when Americans seem to be developing shorter and shorter attention spans, the American public seems increasingly willing to take images carefully constructed by campaign strategists at face value, as evidenced by Karl Rove's success at painting George W. Bush as a folksy, down-to-earth, all-American guy you'd love to invite to your next barbecue. Many Americans seemed to buy this image, despite the fact that it is utterly divorced from the reality of Bush as the multimillionaire son of a former CIA director, vice president, and president, a son who was handed an oil company despite his reportedly lackluster performance at Harvard Business School and his well-documented alcohol binges. Folksy indeed.

With the subject of image, of course, comes this article's elephant in the room: race. The son of an exchange student from Kenya and a white Kansan, raised in Hawaii and Indonesia, and the half-brother of the half-Indonesian daughter of his mother's second marriage, Obama's race and background are tough to put into the sorts of easy categories still so prevalent in contemporary America. Despite the time many of us spend here at Ursinus deconstructing popular ideas about race, most Americans have not had the opportunity of a liberal arts education like we have, and those racial constructions remain alive and well in the popular mind. Despite Obama's complex racial heritage, if the last presidential race of buzz words and bumper sticker slogans was any indication, most Americans will likely make the quick judgment of assigning Obama to one half of the false but pervasive dichotomy of black and white that is, sadly, as American as baseball and apple pie. So the question is, will the majority of Americans fear and distrust Obama's race, black, mixed, or whatever they choose to call it? Or will they view it, like the way Obama portrays himself, as a catalyst for bringing together people of diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, and opinions in this nation where dualities – black and white, red state and blue state – seem to be tearing us apart? Only time will tell.

Long live the singer/songwriter

This article comes in the midst of sad news: Starbucks is officially entering the music industry, bringing their label *Hear Music* out of the coffee house and on to shelves across the country. Continuing in the wake of this news, Paul McCartney has decided to sign to *Hear Music*, thus proving that Starbucks really does control everything. In light of this sad, sad news, there is a shining beacon of hope; his name is Elvis Perkins. Perkins' debut album *Ash Wednesday* breathes life into the current world of music, especially that



BRANDON BROWN
Here Music

of the singer/songwriter genre. He is the son of the late Anthony Perkins, the famous actor who played Norman Bates in Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 film adaptation of Robert Bloch's novel, *Psycho*. Elvis's debut album is a blend of Damien Rice, Bob Dylan, and Elliott Smith all wrapped in one little package, taking the best of each and making it his own. There is Dylan's story telling ability and cross between singing and talking; the soft, emotionally moving voice like that of Elliott Smith; and Damien Rice's careful rhythms.

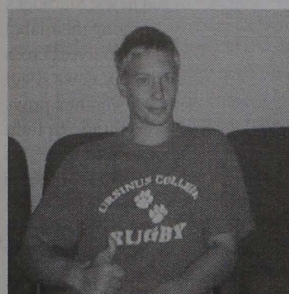
The opening track, 'While You Were Sleeping' opens with a simple picked rhythm, adding a bass, and then drums. This buildup is characteristic of most of the songs on this album, infusing the songs with a sense of progression, keeping the listener interested in both lyrics and music. 'All the Night Without Love' is like a Leonard Cohen tune. Then by the third track, 'May Day!', Perkins picks up the tempo, moving into a rocking tune reminiscent of Ben Kweller. The song which got me into Elvis Perkins, 'Ash Wednesday,' is possibly one of my favorite songs by a singer/songwriter since 'Angeles' by Elliott Smith. The dirge-like movement, a slow descending upright bass line, a simple drum beat, and a sustained note as the chorus approaches accentuate the darkness of the song. Then, as the song reaches its end, strings enter to bring the song to a beautiful climax. 'It's a Sad World After All' is a slow contemplative tune toward the end of the album, featuring a female vocalist accentuating Perkins' voice. The chorus features one of the sweetest lines I've heard in a while: "And I would be happy for you to stay/With me till tomorrow can be called today/ in a sad world."

Clocking in at just under an hour, *Ash Wednesday* is one of the best debut albums I've listened to in a long time. We live in a day and age where aging rockers go on their fifth farewell reunion tour and bands break up and form super groups. Elvis Perkins is a breath of fresh air to new music. Although many of the songs are not upbeat, they are mellow and perfect for listening to while doing school-work. *Ash Wednesday* is a must for anyone who enjoys singer/songwriters or who simply enjoys listening to good music.

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"Smokin' Aces" (2007)

Have you ever wondered what "Ocean's 11" would have been like on crystal meth? I realize that will probably be the most ridiculous question you deal with today (or this month, for that matter), but take a moment and think about it. The violence would be jacked up from non-existent to extreme, the ridiculousness of the heist would be all the more insane, and Andy Garcia would be that much more of a dick. The movie this week is about as close as one can come to that experience without ingesting a seriously dangerous chemical cocktail cooked up in somebody's kitchen, and with that I give you



ALEX ERNST
The Back Row

"Smokin' Aces."

Buddy "Aces" Israel (Jeremy Piven) has a \$1 million bounty put on his head after he decides to turn in evidence on a dying mob boss. Israel is sequestered on the penthouse floor of a Tahoe hotel, and every freak and murderer in the hit man business sets out to kill Israel and collect the bounty.

If there's one thing this movie has in spades, it's balls. All stops are pulled, be it in brutality, cast, or sheer guts. The film unleashes one of the best collections of psychopaths and killers to hit the screen in a long time. Ranging from Neo-Nazis and a mercenary who specializes in torture to a master of disguise, all the hit men (and hit women) have their own modus operandi that works without feeling cheesy or forced.

Much needs to be said about this cast as well. Watching this movie, I couldn't help but marvel at the sheer quantity of talent the producers managed to throw up on the screen. To name a few, the cast includes Ben Affleck, Andy Garcia, Ryan Reynolds, Alicia Keyes, Matthew Fox, Ray Liotta, even Curtis "Booger" Armstrong (for all you "Revenge of the Nerds" fans out there). My personal favorite was Justin Bateman as the sleaziest lawyer you'll probably ever see, complete with cold sore and cross dressing tendencies. The only problem is that the star of the show, Jeremy Piven, feels wasted in the role as the burned-out magician. Because his character is portrayed as being at the end of his rope, the audience is robbed of Piven's manic energy that usually makes him so enjoyable to watch (See just about any episode of "Entourage" for further proof).

So much of a film like this depends on setting up the location, and I am happy to say that "Smokin' Aces" really comes through in this regard. The movie manages to set up Israel's penthouse, its security, and the access points in a way that fits in with the story and blissfully manages to sound like more than just straight exposition.

As for the pick of the week, the closest thing I could come up with in terms of ensemble cast, great set-up, and Andy Garcia as morally ambiguous character, has to be "Ocean's 11." The film definitely serves as an inspiration for "Smokin' Aces" and is still revolutionary for its reinvention of the formula that proved so successful in "The Sting." So in summary, see "Smokin' Aces," "Ocean's 11," and "The Sting." But avoid "Ocean's 12" and "The Sting II." Not worth the money you'll spend at Blockbuster to rent them.

Alex Ernst is really worried for Ben Affleck's career and why he thinks the handlebar mustache is a good idea. You can reach him at alernst@ursinus.edu.

Fear and loathing on the campaign trail '08: a campaign of predictability

When I started this segment a few weeks back, I sincerely thought that the campaign would be interesting and worth writing about. However, as it turns out, the only thing worth writing about is how frighteningly boring the campaign is.

"Frighteningly" may be an odd adverb to attach to the word "boring," for something cannot be both frightening and boring, can it? Well, no, at least according to the conventional wisdom, but this is Cfd, for Christ's sake! See, boring things are only frightening when they aren't supposed to be boring. Your Math for the Liberal Arts Major class is boring, but that's okay, because everyone accepts that it's nonsense and is, more or less, designed to be boring. But, a political campaign, especially for a politico like yours truly, should not be boring. The latest batch of boredom came when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, in his buffoon-ish, two words per minute way of speaking, said that homosexuality is immoral, rekindling debate about our ever-so-wise military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy (and rekindling debate about President Bush's ability to appoint halfway intelligent people to important governmental positions. Don't even get me started on that hack Alberto Gonzales...).

As a brief digression, it seems ludicrous to me that an organization whose duties include things as vitally important as defending the United States and fighting wars would give two seconds worth of thought to how guys get their rocks off. The argument (I hesitate to even call it an argument, really) goes something like this: we can't have gay men be attracted to other men in the military; it would cause disruption, and given that gays are ridiculed by many in society (and probably many more in the military society), there could be troop conflicts. The first argument would necessarily have to exclude women, and the second would seem to legitimize historical segregation in the military. Compelling!

Forgive me; on with the discussion. The responses of the Republican candidates could have been interesting; McCain was once known for being a maverick, and Giuliani and Romney both have histories of sup-

porting gay rights. The former noted that the policy is "working," whatever that means. And Giuliani and Romney argued that given that we are at war, we shouldn't be questioning the military's admissions policies (despite the fact that Romney explicitly opposed the policy years earlier).

Despite the glaring stupidity of this last statement (being at war and having our troops stretched thin is the *ideal* time to question the military's admissions policies), it was predictable. The Republicans, despite their rather moderate pasts, all fell in line. And so did the Democrats. Rather than seeing Hillary v. Obama v. Edwards and McCain v. Giuliani v. Romney, we saw three cookie-cutter Democrats v. three cookie-cutter Republicans.

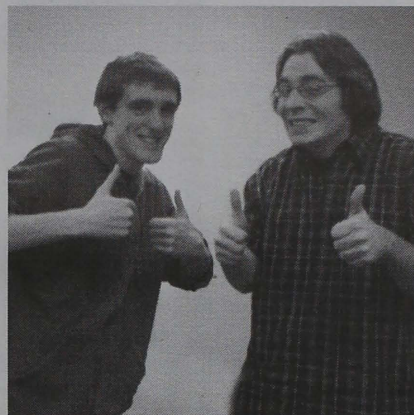
This is what is frightening. The goal of a primary is for the parties to pick their best candidates. But, the candidates are all the same!

Or at least they're *acting* the same. Rather than the primary campaign being a forum in which candidates can put forward sincere views, it has become an audition of sorts: who can best portray the ideal Democrat and the ideal Republican? All of the Democratic contenders are going to be vying for the support of the liberal wing of the Democratic party (since they're the ones who get out and vote on Primary Election Day), and the Republican contenders will be striving to win over the nut-job Christian conservative base of the Republican Party.

In General Election season, the candidates have to tangle with that all-important *majority* of Americans (i.e. moderates). Unfortunately, though, the primary campaign process fundamentally ignores the majority of us; decisions are made by the extremist wings of the parties (that's why we get whack-jobs like George W. Bush winning over John McCain and hacks like John Kerry winning over compelling candidates like John Edwards).

I usually don't condone apathy, but I'll make an exception here. You might as well just ignore the news regarding the presidential race until at least February 2008. You'll just be bored, for all of the "news" will be predictable (unless, of course, it is finally revealed that Hillary Clinton is actually a man). And really, that is worth being frightened about.

When Matt and Dan aren't despairing about the future of American Politics, they sometimes check their e-mail. Send them something to distract their minds: maflyntz@ursinus.edu and dasergeant@ursinus.edu.



MATT FLYNTZ
DAN SERGEANT

Think you're pretty clever, eh? Show off your wits; get published in *The Grizzly*! E-mail the Opinions editor at maflyntz@ursinus.edu

If you'd like to get involved in Ursinus' campus newspaper, send an email to grizzly@ursinus.edu. We welcome new writers and photographers!

Bears hungry for CC crown

MATTHEW PASTOR
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After coming off a season that ended with a loss at the Centennial Conference Championship game against Haverford, the Ursinus softball team started off their 2007 campaign in Orlando, Fla. during Spring break.

Although the Bears returned to campus with a 6-4 record (they finished 8-2 in Florida last year), Head Coach Terry McGowan has a lot to be happy about going into conference play. One of the biggest reasons to be excited about 2007 is the return of two-time Centennial Conference Pitcher of the Year, Mallory Greene. Greene, a senior for the Bears, won all five games she pitched in Florida going 25 solid innings, while giving up 17 hits, 5 earned runs and striking out 25 batters. If Greene can continue her dominance in the Centennial Conference as she did in Florida, the Bears will be racking up a lot more "W's."

Another reason Coach McGowan is all smiles is on the offensive side of the ball for the Bears. Fellow senior Mary Reid led the Bears offensive attack in Florida with 10 RBIs, while batting .345. Meanwhile, sophomores Jennie Moore (1st team All-CC last year) and Katie Gallagher (All-CC honorable mention last year) led the Bears in batting average, hitting .382 and .370 respectively. Moore also scored 9 runs and stole 3 bases on 3 attempts.

The Bears also have a plethora of supporting players that have contributed to the

success the softball team has had over the years and should continue to do it this season. Junior pitcher/infielder, Lindsay Schmidt (2nd team All-CC last year), went 13-2 last season with a 2.26 ERA, while striking out 71 batters and also batted .357 with



Mallory Greene

20 hits and 14 RBIs. Schmidt went 1-1 on the mound in Florida and also had 3 hits and 3 RBIs. Meanwhile, fellow junior infielders Jessica Cherry and Sarah Hennessey provide stellar defense for the Bears and are also big contributors to the Bears' success on of-

fense. Cherry (All-CC honorable mention last year), had 2 hits in Florida, while Hennessey (1st team All-CC last year), added 4 hits and 4 RBIs.

Sophomore Kait Sutherland will assume the role as catcher for the Bears this season. In Florida, Sutherland started all 10 games for the Bears, batting .259, while driving in 10 RBIs on 7 hits. Although young, Sutherland has a lot of experience in the back-stop as she appeared in 21 games last year and started 18 of them.

Junior outfielder Erin McHugh had the best hitting performance in Florida for the Bears as she batted .500 in 9 games played. She also stole 4 bases on 4 attempts and crossed the plate 6 times for the Bears. If she can continue to get on base this season, the Bears shouldn't have a problem bringing her home.

Although going 0-3 for the Bears in Florida, up and coming freshman pitcher Lauren Davis did show some promise as she had the lowest ERA at 1.03 and struck out a team high 31 batters in 20.1 innings pitched.

As the season progresses, expect to see the Bears improve and become a better team in every aspect of the game. With a tremendous amount of talent in the batting lineup for the Bears, one of the best pitchers in the Centennial Conference (if not the best), and a solid supporting cast, there is no reason why we shouldn't be seeing the Ursinus softball team back in the hunt for another Centennial Conference Championship this season!

Longball key to Bears victory

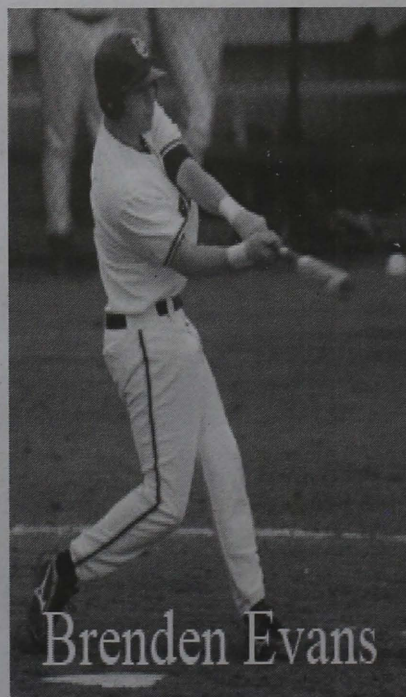
DANIELLE LANGDON
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A homerun rally helped the UC Bears Baseball team (7-3) rack in a win at their home opener against Eastern last Wednesday. Junior Brad Wickersham hit the first home run of his college career and added a 5-for-5 performance. Brendan Evans joined Wickersham smacking two solo home runs and putting Ursinus past Eastern 9-3 in non-conference baseball action. Evans and Wickersham started it off with consecutive shots into the outfield putting the Bears in a 4-0 lead after just three innings. David Randolph wanted in on the action as he recorded three RBIs off a double. Brett Umstead followed, registering two solid hits. Sean Ciletti tried to help the Eagles, going 1-for-3, one run scored, and one RBI; however, it just wasn't enough to conquer the Bears.

Junior Mike Ziemak joined in on the hitting streak, adding a double to left field. Ryan Costello got hit by a pitch, and Umstead sent Costello home with a single to put the Bears ahead of Eastern 3-0. After Caruso took a base on balls, Ziemak grounded out to help send him to the plate, adding yet another run in the third. In the bottom of the fifth inning, Evans sent the ball flying over the left-field

fence, recording his third career home run and second of the day with two outs.

Using seven different pitchers, the Bears did not give up one run in the first six innings of the game. It was not until the top of the seventh inning that Eastern finally tallied a run. Eagle John Montague tallied the first hit off a single between first and second. Dan Wilson followed, smacking a double and bringing in Ciletti from second to put up the first run. The Eagles added two more runs in the eighth, bringing the score closer at 5-3, but the Bears were not willing to give up yet. UC pushed ahead 9-3 with four runs in the bottom of the ninth. J.C. Colon kicked off the inning with a single to center field followed by a sacrifice bunt by Rory Graver that sent Colon to second. Senior Tommy Herman walked and Umstead loaded the bases with a perfectly placed bunt down the left-field line. Next up, Randolph sent a double into center field sending all three runners past the plate. Randolph then tallied the final run off a Wickersham single up the middle. Pitcher Zeb Engle took home the win for his second victory of the season striking out two of the three batters he faced. The Bears take on TCNJ tonight and Stockton on Saturday; both games are away.



Brenden Evans

Bearly Reminder

Here's a look at the early spring sports schedule from Thursday, March 22nd to Wednesday, March 28th. The spring sports teams are well into the swing of things, so show some support this week coming up!

Women's Rugby
 3/24 @ Lafayette

Baseball
 3/22 @ TCNJ
 3/24 @ Stockton
 3/27 vs. F&M

Softball
 3/22 @ Lebanon Valley
 3/25 @ Wilmington
 3/27 vs. Gwynedd Mercy

Men's Lax
 3/24 vs. F&M
 3/28 vs. Washington

Women's Lax
 3/22 vs. TCNJ
 3/24 vs. Muhlenberg
 3/27 @ Rowan

Men's Tennis
 3/24 vs. Gettysburg
 3/28 @ Muhlenberg

Women's Tennis
 3/24 vs. Washington

Men's Golf
 3/26 @ Swarthmore
 3/27 @ Gettysburg
 Invitational

Women's Golf
 4/2 @ Muhlenberg Spring
 Classic
 4/10 Ursinus Invitational

Track & Field
 3/24 @ Towson Invitational